



Marcia Mayeda  
Director

**County of Los Angeles**  
**Department of Animal Care and Control**  
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**Animal Care Center  
(ACC) Locations**

Agoura ACC  
29525 Agoura Rd.  
Agoura, CA 91301  
(818) 991-0071

Baldwin Park ACC  
4275 N. Elton St.  
Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 962-3577

Carson/Gardena ACC  
216 W. Victoria St.  
Gardena, CA 90248  
(310) 523-9566

Castaic ACC  
31044 N. Charlie Cyn.  
Road  
Castaic, CA 91384  
(661) 257-3191

Downey ACC  
11258 S. Garfield Ave.  
Downey, CA 90242  
(562) 940-6898

Lancaster ACC  
5210 W. Avenue I  
Lancaster, CA 93536  
(661) 940-4191

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: Marcia Mayeda  
Director

**REPORT ON PROVIDING LOW-COST SPAY/NEUTER SERVICES FOR  
CATS (ITEM NO. 3, AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 17, 2015)**

On February 17, 2015, your Board instructed the Director of the Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) and County Counsel to prepare a draft ordinance modeled on the County's successful mandatory spay/neuter ordinance for dogs, to require spaying/neutering of cats as well. Additionally, your Board instructed the Director of DACC to report back during budget deliberations regarding the costs for providing low-cost spay/neuter services to the public; to report back to the Board on the outreach to the various communities regarding spay/neuter information; and provide a copy of the ordinance, once adopted, to the 88 cities in the County encouraging them to adopt a similar ordinance.

**Background**

Title 10 of the Los Angeles County Code – Animals, requires that all dog owners spay or neuter their dogs unless they meet a stated exemption. Exemptions are given for dogs that are competition (show) dogs, dogs used by law enforcement agencies, service and assistance dogs, and dogs unable to be spayed or neutered for medical reasons.

Spaying and neutering of companion animals is a critical preventive method to reduce the number of unwanted animals born in our communities. These unwanted animals are abandoned, neglected, allowed to roam and become nuisances, and contribute to public health concerns. Spaying and neutering also reduces or eliminates undesirable pet behavior such as aggression, the

desire to roam in search of a mate, unwelcome vocalization, and other quality of life nuisances.

Many local jurisdictions, such as the cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Long Beach require sterilization of both dogs and cats. The Board of Supervisors has instructed DACC and County Counsel to prepare a draft ordinance that will require the sterilization of cats, and for DACC to provide information regarding low-cost services that would be available to cat owners to comply with this requirement.

### **Status of Ordinance**

The draft ordinance is being prepared and will be ready for review shortly by County Counsel. It will be brought to your Board when that review has been completed. It is estimated to be before your Board in July 2015.

### **Outreach to Communities**

Educating the public about the importance of spaying and neutering their pets is a key component of DACC's mission. The Department strongly encourages the spaying and neutering of animals on its website, through social media, and through education by officers and animal care center staff. The Department also lists low-cost spay/neuter resources on its website, and maintains a spay/neuter unit which regularly advises and assists the public with low-cost spay/neuter service information.

### **Costs for Providing Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Services for Cats**

The cost to spay or neuter a cat at private veterinary hospitals ranges between \$150 and \$200. There are some low-cost spay/neuter resources for cat owners and caregivers that reduce that cost. DACC provides information to pet owners on accessing these services.

DACC provides a limited number of low cost services at its medical facilities. DACC has also collaborated with a number of nonprofit animal welfare organizations to bring low-cost services to the public. These are achieved through special mobile spay/neuter clinics, voucher programs, and an ongoing Safety Net program operated at our Baldwin Park and Downey Animal Care Centers. The Safety Net program, operated by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in collaboration with DACC, provides educational information and financial assistance to cat owners who cannot afford to pay for the surgery. DACC is currently exploring the possibility of

expanding this program to the Lancaster Animal Care Center, in collaboration with another nonprofit animal welfare organization.

The Board of Supervisors has instructed DACC to identify low-cost spay/neuter opportunities for cat owners. DACC has reviewed many options to bring these services to the public and recommends a multi-faceted approach. This includes:

1. Establishment of a low-cost cat spay/neuter voucher program for cats. Vouchers in the amount of \$50 will be provided to residents to help offset the cost of the cat sterilization. The DACC is able to fund this through the unclaimed spay/neuter trust deposits left by adopters, pursuant to CA Food and Agricultural Codes §30503 and §31751.3 DACC already operates such a program for dogs and can absorb this additional cost and responsibility into its operations.
2. Providing expanded low-cost spay/neuter services to the community by opening DACC's medical clinics on the weekends. Currently, surgeries during the week are limited to spaying and neutering DACC adoption animals as required by state law. This leaves very limited opportunities to provide additional surgical services to the public. By operating medical clinics on the weekends, DACC will be able to provide local resources to its communities. The benefits of operating clinics at DACC facilities are that the public knows a regular location and schedule of available dates; there are veterinarians on duty during the week following the surgery clinic to attend to any post-surgical needs; and there are DACC staff on site at the care center to assist with any unexpected operational matters.

The cost to operate such a clinic would require the hiring of a full time Intermediate Typist Clerk to schedule appointments, return telephone calls, and provide direct service to the pet owners on the day of surgery. Other staff would be hired just for the day of service. The daily cost for an in-house, low-cost spay/neuter clinic that will perform 40 surgeries each day varies between \$3,372 and \$4,795, depending on the number of clinics offered each year. This cost can be offset by charging pet owners a reduced fee of \$50 for the surgery. This revenue will reduce the daily cost of operating a clinic by \$2,000. A summary of these costs is provided in Attachment A.

3. Operating a mobile spay/neuter clinic. DACC has received a generous offer from the Coalition for Pets and Public Safety, a local nonprofit animal welfare organization, of the donation of a mobile spay/neuter clinic. The benefits of having a mobile clinic is that DACC can bring services to communities where transportation to a stationary clinic is difficult.

The cost to operate such a clinic would require the hiring of a full time Intermediate Typist Clerk to handle appointment scheduling, return telephone calls, and provide direct service to the pet owners on the day of surgery (not necessary if one is already hired under Option 2 above). Other staff would be hired just for the day of service. The daily cost for a mobile low-cost spay/neuter clinic that performs 40 surgeries per day varies between \$3,423 and \$4,887, depending on the number of clinics offered each year. This cost can be offset by charging pet owners a reduced fee of \$50 for the surgery. This revenue will reduce the daily cost of operating a clinic by \$2,000. A summary of these costs is provided in the attachment.

4. Hiring a Third Party Vendor to Provide Services in DACC Facilities. Another option for using DACC's medical clinics on the weekends is for DACC to contract with a service provider to operate spay/neuter clinics in DACC facilities. This model has been successfully used before by DACC. DACC will issue a Request for Information to identify potential service providers.

### **Conclusion**

DACC recommends a multi-faceted approach to expanding resources for low-cost spay/neuter of cats. These include providing vouchers for low-cost spay/neuter cat surgeries, providing in-house spay/neuter services, and conducting mobile spay/neuter clinics in targeted communities with the greatest need.

DACC can fund the low-cost spay/neuter cat vouchers with the unclaimed spay/neuter trust deposits as directed by state law. Additionally, DACC requests \$102,900 in funding to provide 75 in-house public low-cost spay/neuter clinics. Each clinic would spay or neuter 40 animals per day, for a total of 3,000 animals.

MM:in  
Low Cost S-N For Cats

### **Attachment**

- c: Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel

**Department of Animal Care and Control**

**Costs to Operate Low-Cost Spay Neuter Clinics**

<b>In-House Spay/Neuter Clinics</b>					
<b># Clinics per Year</b>	<b># Animals Sterilized</b>	<b>Daily Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Offset*</b>	<b>Adjusted Daily Cost</b>	<b>Annual Cost</b>
75	3,000	\$3,372	(\$2,000)	\$1,372	\$102,900
50	2,000	\$3,846	(\$2,000)	\$1,846	\$92,300
30	1,200	\$4,795	(\$2,000)	\$2,795	\$83,850

<b>Mobile Spay/Neuter Clinics</b>					
<b># Clinics per Year</b>	<b># Animals Sterilized</b>	<b>Daily Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Offset*</b>	<b>Adjusted Daily Cost</b>	<b>Annual Cost</b>
75	3,000	\$3,423	(\$2,000)	\$1,423	\$106,725
50	2,000	\$3,911	(\$2,000)	\$1,911	\$95,550
30	1,200	\$4,887	(\$2,000)	\$2,887	\$86,610

\*Revenue offset consists of a \$50 per animal charge to the owner to help offset the costs of the surgery. The Department can perform 40 surgeries per day.